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FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF
LAVINIA L. DOCK



ORGANIZATION NOTES

THE Matrons' Council meeting at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in October had a number of interesting matters of business to transact. A pleasant incident was the passing of a resolution, on motion of Miss Isla Stewart, expressive of appreciation of the long years of service in the profession of Miss Agnes Brennan, who lately gave up her post in Bellevue Hospital, New York. Miss Brennan is an honorary member of the Matrons' Council.

The formation of the Society for the State Registration of Nurses was reported. This society, which now numbers nearly five hundred members, was organized by a committee of the Matrons' Council, and is one of the most conspicuous of the various pieces of public work achieved by the council.

Mrs. Bedford-Fenwick, secretary of the Society for State Registration, addressed meetings of nurses in Edinburgh and Glasgow on this subject early in November. Her address was a masterly presentation of the whole question, based upon an historical outline, and built up with every professional, educational, and ethical argument and proof in favor of the movement. Space does not allow its reprint in full, and it would be a pity to condense it. Every nurse who wishes a complete history of the registration movement should procure a copy of this speech.

PREPARATIONS are being made for the International Congress in Berlin in 1904. Committees will be formed in every nation to choose topics and speakers. The International Council of Nurses will reassemble at that time, and it is not too soon for prominent nurses and nurses' organizations to plan for this event.

LETTERS

[THE following letter from Mexico was kindly sent us by Miss Snively, of the Toronto General Hospital, to whom it was written by Miss Thorne, one of her graduates:]

"Mapimi, Durango Mapimi, Mexico, is situated near the Sierra Madre Mountains. It is three thousand feet above sea-level and has a population of fifteen thousand people.

"One does not get the right idea of distance here, everything seems so near and yet is so far away. The mornings and evenings are perfectly delightful, and the sunrise and sunset over the mountains grand indeed. Our time here is two hours slower than that of Canada. The inhabitants all rise early, and I think that is the reason one feels so well. It never troubles us to get up at four or five A.M., the air is so sweet and pure, though we find it necessary to wear warmer clothing morning and evening.

"The flowers are in bloom now, and when the arsenic smoke from the smelters does not destroy them they are very beautiful.

"Situated near the hospital is a mountain which to all appearance it would not be a difficult matter to ascend, so I suggested to a friend one day that we climb it. She told me that that would take two days to accomplish, and that a young gentleman, when a stranger here, wandered out alone one morning and, having no idea of the distance, undertook to climb the mountain. He climbed all day, and when the top was reached it was dark and he could not return. His friends were nearly frantic, and offered one hundred dollars to anyone who would find him. Half the town searched all night in vain. Late the next day the adventurer returned almost a total wreck, his lips dry and bleeding from want of water, and completely exhausted.

"This is the first day of May, and it is quite warm enough. Everything is very bright down here, and although it is a strange-looking place, it is extremely interesting. Mapimi is one of the quaintest places on earth, with its odd-looking streets, its 'adobe' houses, and its strange-looking people.

"In the streets are to be seen men wearing sandals and carrying bundles of fagots on their back, women with large jugs of water hoisted on their shoulders, children wandering about the streets with little or no clothing on them, men and women selling fruit from place to place, and numbers of mules laden with sacks of corns and beans. It all reminds one of Bible stories of the ancient days. As soon as I am able to procure photos of the place I will send you some, and you will get a better idea of Mapimi from them than from any description I could write.

"We have not had one good shower of rain for about four months, and of late the thermometer has been registering from 100° to 112° F. in the shade. If we were to have that temperature in Toronto, we should collapse, but here one doesn't seem to mind it at all.

"I have taken to the Mexican fruits; some of them I am very fond of, but others one has to cultivate a taste for. Most of the fruit is very rich. We get the fresh figs and mangos, which are delicious. There are many other varieties which resemble our Canadian fruits, but all have a large, stony core.

"The hospital is built upon the Mexican plan, all the doors opening into a 'patio,' or yard, around which the hospital is built. The surgery stands by itself in the centre of the patio. Everything is on the ground-floor. The ceilings are very high and the floors beautifully polished. There are three private rooms and two large wards, accommodating in all twenty patients. There are good systems of water-works and electric lights and a bountiful staff of servants, so that everything is kept very nicely.

"Pneumonia is one of the most fatal diseases in this vicinity.

"The company are very generous in their efforts to make the hospital all that it should be, and, of course, they are quite proud of it. Of the white population there are some seven or eight Canadians, the remainder are Americans and all very nice people.

"I am learning some Spanish, of course. Just now I am taking three lessons a week and am picking up the names of all the things we use. None of the servants speak English, and the other day I asked the cook in English to do something, upon which she said in the most distracted way in Spanish, 'Only God knows what you say.' It would be amusing to you to hear me speak to the servants in Spanish and English mixed. It seemed quite an undertaking at first, there are so many things to think about here. The head nurse keeps all the books, and the orders for the stores have to be written in Spanish.

"ELLA THORNE."

[THE next extracts are also taken from letters of Miss Snively's nurses who have gone to Yukon, Miss Christine Smith, who has taken charge of the Good Samaritan Hospital in Dawson City, and Miss Ada Gould and Miss Ida Anderson, head nurses:]

"The trip from Toronto to Dawson City occupied two weeks and two days (five days of which were spent in Vancouver) and was perfectly delightful from beginning to end.

"After arriving in Dawson we had a whole week to rest before entering upon our duties at the hospital.

"The Good Samaritan Hospital consists of a main part built of logs and three frame wings. It contains seven private wards, one long semi-private ward, and one long public ward (in which are fourteen beds), two patients' sitting-rooms, the lady superintendent's office, the doctor's office and sitting-room, two large lavatories with patients' clothes-room and store-rooms combined.

"The building has a good system of electric lights and an electric bell attached to every bed. We have not at present, however, any system of water-works. In the summer there is one tap in the kitchen, but in the winter that freezes up and the water is all delivered in barrels.

"Our staff at present consists of three nurses, one resident house-surgeon, night and day orderly, and cook. We get other nurses in when we require more assistance. The nursing so far has not been heavy.

"We have an ample supply of linen, blankets, pillows, spreads, etc., plenty of water-bottles, rubber rings, rubber sheets, etc.

"The rate per day for our private wards is seven dollars and a half to ten dollars, semi-private five dollars per day, and for our government cases we receive two dollars and a half per day. Most of our work consists of surgical nursing. We had one case of enteric fever this fall and later on we expect to have rheumatism and pneumonia cases, but the surgery predominates.

"We have quite a number of men from the mines who have sustained fractures and wounds which have been allowed to suppurate from lack of attention. So far I have done all the dispensing myself.

"We nurses have our rooms upstairs in the main building of the hospital, and they are very cosy indeed. The walls are papered, wood-work painted, and floors carpeted. We each have a bed-room of our own and a cosy little sitting-room.

"The church, the hospital, and Dr. Grant's house all stand in the same grounds.

"Dr. Grant possesses a beautiful lawn (the only one in Dawson), and he did the work of cultivating it himself.

"The church is as pretty a little building as any in Toronto—lovely pipe-organ, first-class organist, good choir, and a large congregation of fine-looking people.

"The weather up here has been very pleasant all fall. We are still (October 19) dressing at seven A.M. without a light and dine at six P.M. without a light also as a rule.

"We have a theatre in Dawson and a very good stock company at present.

"I shall never regret having come to Dawson, if it were for nothing else than the trip itself, we had such a delightful time. Since our arrival here one of us has gained in weight fifteen pounds and another ten pounds, so that, you see, we are not any the worse for the change."

[MISS DORCAS TEAS sends a copy of the last report of the mission work in Egypt with which she is connected, from which we take some extracts:]

“ASYUT, EGYPT.

“FIFTH ANNUAL HOSPITAL REPORT, 1901. *E. Dorcas Teas.*

“With thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for all His goodness during the changes, difficulties, joys, and sorrows of the past year, this report is presented—January, 1901, to December.

“There have been changes. When we entered upon the work of the year we occupied the old house in town where the four previous years had been spent, realizing more and more the inconvenience of carrying on hospital work under such conditions.

“Patients increased in numbers; great crowding was necessary in order not to turn many away; difficulties were numerous, but we may not now mention these all, as we have come to the realization of our hopes in the way of a building. No more now the close, small rooms, the foul air, which could never be avoided, but the spacious, airy, convenient hospital which God has given us.

“We are greatly indebted to the church at home as well as the church in Egypt and other friends here for the aid rendered in raising sufficient funds for the erection of the present building, and pray that they may have a rich blessing in their own souls. We entered the new hospital on October 14, 1901. There was much in the way of finishing remaining to be done at that date, and the noise of various workmen inside and outside of the house continues to the present. Still, each day brings it nearer to completion, while we are able to work with so much satisfaction and comfort that such matters are unheeded, and the patients seem so happy, living half the time outside upon the veranda which runs along the east side of the building. The ventilation and sanitary arrangements are all that could be desired. Facilities for heating water are now being arranged. Some new pieces of furniture have been added to the operating-room—a new sterilizer, thanks to a friend in America; ward carriage, which we purchased, with various other necessary things, which help to add to the comfort of the workers as well as that of the patients.

“There were admitted to the hospital, viz.:

Men	360	Europeans	10
Women	245	Syrians	6
Children	66	Egyptians	655
Total	671	Total	671

“One hundred and eighty-eight of the above number were surgical cases. Many other operations were performed on patients who were not admitted to the hospital and the records have not been on hand since the ‘moving.’ One hundred and twenty-six villages were represented.

“As to the religious persuasion, the Coptic element predominated, but about one-fifth were Moslems—more than any previous year. Many pay for admission, others are treated free. We would be glad to admit many more and treat them free, but funds are hard to procure, and the expenses of conducting a large institution are heavy, giving many a moment of anxiety to those who have the control and responsibility.

“More nurses are needed, and the servants necessarily must be increased in number. The new house accommodates twice the number of patients, and has been well filled since we entered. For instance, thirty-five was the limit

we could admit in the old house, unless we crowded very uncomfortably; we can now take seventy, and, if necessary, eighty, and not be too badly crowded.

"Every effort is made to have the nursing done in the most scientific manner, but to the present moment there have been no other trained nurses assisting. Those we have trained from the beginning are with us. One we taught left us last summer to go to her home in Syria. . . .

"A neat building for the care of contagious diseases has been erected at a distance from the hospital proper, and is the gift of Mr. Alexander Humphreys, of New York; also an elevator for patients' use is furnished by the same donor, and is a tribute to the memory of, first, Dr. Smith, and, second, the two sons of Mr. Humphreys, who were drowned in the Nile last year. The above-mentioned gift is all because of kindness shown the bereaved family in their time of sorrow by the doctor whose name we have given. Many gifts towards endowing beds have come in, for which we heartily thank the givers. The running expenses of the hospital for the year amounted to four thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine dollars and twenty-five cents. Fees of patients were not sufficient to cover expenses. The contributions reached six hundred and thirty-three dollars and ninety cents.

ITEMS

A PAMPHLET has been written by a German nurse, a sister of the Red Cross in Munich, in which she strongly advocates the formation of nurses' organizations and the regulation and supervision of their education, character, and general standing by the State, with final examination and diploma given by the State and a legally guarded uniform. The article, which is called "The Nursing of Men by Women Nurses," indicates that there is as much confusion, laxity, and want of standards in the nursing profession in Germany as we have here, owing to the disappearance of the religious control and the arising of a new, independent occupation for women which as yet is practically unregulated.

